

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (MO-08) today congratulated Plato, Missouri on its official recognition as the 2010 Census Center of U.S. Population. This marks the fourth decade in which the center of population has resided in the state of Missouri.

"This is really an honor for Plato, for Texas County, and for the Eighth Congressional District," Emerson said. "I think of our district as reflecting the best virtues of our nation, and Plato is emblematic of so many of these same values.

Plato is located ten miles south of Ft. Leonard Wood.

"This community is now part of the history of the nation in a special way, and I think Plato also rightly serves as a national reminder that the rural portion of our country is just as important, if not more important, than the urban portion. The Eighth Congressional District is larger than many states, yet we contain as many Americans as some congressional districts which can be measured in city blocks. Our quality of life is unsurpassed by any other place in the nation, and we work extremely hard to build and support the future of the country. It's nice for that effort to get some recognition on this important day," Emerson said.

Attached is the letter Rep. Emerson sent to the proceedings in Plato today:

To the Residents of Plato, Missouri:

I'm very proud to send you congratulations on this memorable day for Plato, for our congressional district, and for the nation. Commemorating the 2010 Census Center of Population is an honor the State of Missouri has been fortunate to host for four decades, and Plato now shares in a distinguished part of our nation's history.

I can think of no better way to represent the Center of Population than in a community, a county, and a congressional district where we are an example of the national values our country shares from sea to shining sea: hard work, a love of freedom, and a spirit of service. The recognition

afforded by the Census designation is a further encouragement to continue to remain home for these exemplary traditions. Plato is also a reminder that, for Americans in cities large and small, we are all connected to one another by the rich past of an ever-growing nation. The Midwest, our westward expansion, our agrarian history; all these components are connected in places like Texas County.

Allow me to express my appreciation to the U.S. Census Bureau, the National Geodetic Survey and the National Geologic Survey for their continued excellence in publishing data on our unique and diverse nation – especially in Missouri. Today's event is a landmark for Plato, and a testament to the hard work of many, many people. It is my distinct honor to represent Plato in the U.S. House of Representatives, and I am very happy to send all of the community's residents my very best wishes on this special day.

Very sincerely,

JO ANN EMERSON

Member of Congress